

I Love You Too by OTTSTF

Series: [Stranger Connections \[4\]](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

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Summary:

Why must Mike sleep on the sofa every time?

It's not fair. He's done nothing wrong, and he never would.

Fluff follows. More fluff than I thought I could ever write.

I Love You Too

Author's Note:

I wasn't expecting to jump to this kind of scene so soon, but I can't think of a story to encompass my other ideas as of yet.

So, here you go; fluff kingdom awaits.

"Alright guys, time for sleep. It's late."

Hopper's voice emerges from the cabin's kitchen as Mike and El lay on the sofa together watching TV. He's been here all day, going through what 'school' work she needed help with. To be fair, that's quite a lot at the moment. But that's the whole point in these 'tutoring sessions' she has with Mike, or occasionally Nancy. They need to work as fast as they can if she's going to make it into high school with them.

They'd eventually decided that they'd done enough for one day, and would pick up tomorrow (as somewhere down the line, they'd decided that Mike was going to stay the night. *'Damn these kids.'* Hopper thinks to himself multiple times throughout the day), so they retired to the couch to watch whatever they could find. Unsurprisingly, El's addiction to soaps won the choice (as if Mike would ever oppose what El wanted).

Mike hesitantly raises into a sitting position, followed shortly by El. He gets up and heads over to grab the sheets that had been laid out to him, and El watches, a frown forming on her face as he begins to walk back to the sofa. It doesn't even take a milisecond for Mike to notice.

"Hey El, what's wrong?" all alarms on full blast inside his head immediately. Bad memories? Flashbacks? Christ, why can't she be at peace?

She shakes her head, as if she's reading his mind. She gives a small smirk, as if to reassure him everything's fine; not that it helps.

"Friends don't lie."

"Mike, I'm fine. Promise."

That must've worked. He lets a small smile play at his lips, before retreating to the couch and laying the sheets over himself, before taking the pillows and placing them behind his head and getting comfortable. El continues watching and tries her hardest to not let the frown she's holding back break free.

Once he's comfortable, she leans down towards him.

"Goodnight, Mike." she whispers, before placing a kiss to his forehead. Hopper, laying in his bed, can't help but roll his eyes. He's not looking at them but he can still imagine a pretty accurate image of what they look like right now.

Mike smiles up to her. "Goodnight, El."

She returns the smile before standing back up and heading towards her bedroom. She makes it to the door, before pausing in the doorframe. She looks back to Mike, laying on the sofa, and begins talking to herself in her head.

Why does he have to sleep on the sofa? It's not fair. Why does Hopper punish him like that?

She can't help but think of it as a punishment. Sure, she's fallen asleep on the sofa plenty of times whilst watching TV, but her bed is a *lot* more comfortable. She'd sleep a lot better knowing Mike was comfortable too.

She eventually comes to a decision. She walks back out, and heads towards Hopper's bed, before tapping him on the shoulder.

"Dad?"

He always feels a smile try to creep up on his face whenever she calls him that. It's still so surreal to him. Every time she says the word it makes him proud of the work they've put in to give her a normal life.

He turns around to see her as he responds.

"Yeah, kid?"

"Why does Mike have to sleep on the sofa?" It's a simple question, at least in her mind. Hopper rolls onto his back, looking towards the

ceiling and letting out a small sigh.

'Oh boy.' he thinks to himself before speaking up. How on Earth is he going to explain this to her? Signs of her twelve years of isolation keep popping up now and then, and this is one of them. She has no sense of personal space, it seems.

"It's... hard to explain, but he can't. You're kids."

Mike overhears the conversation and can't help but blush, as well as panic. What if Hopper thinks he's the one that asked her? *Please El, stop. I want to see tomorrow at least.*

Her eyebrows furrow. What does that have to do with anything?

"Why?"

Oh Christ, is that anger forming in her voice? Shit shit shit, better get ready for this. He sits up, preparing for whatever outlash she might bring upon him.

"El, he just can't."

"Why? What's he done to deserve it?"

W-what? Deserve? Does she think this it's some kind of punishment?

Mike must've heard the anger building in her voice, because he's soon creeping behind them to try and help the situation.

"El, I don't mind the sofa. It's really not that bad."

She turns to him, to begin questioning him.

"But I don't understand. Why can't you sleep with me? What've you done wrong?"

"El, it's not that I've done anything wrong. It's just- ..." He pauses, wondering what on Earth to say.

"He's right, it is hard to explain. I'm sure Joyce or Nancy could try some time."

Joyce? Nancy? Why them?- oh. Personal space. Ugh.

"Oh... I understand."

Mike's eyebrows furrow slightly in confusion, as do Hopper's. El turns

to the latter.

"Dad, *we're not stupid* . It's just sleeping."

Oh man, she does understand. Is that good or bad? Hopper sighs once again before trying his best to come up with things to say.

"I know you're not stupid, kid. But still, it's just-" he's interrupted by her.

"What? *Wrong?* Dad, it's Mike. He's not going to do anything. He's my best friend. More than that."

Yeah, kid, that's the point.

She looks to Mike, who's looks as if he's both shy, embarrassed, and shit scared for his life.

"I just don't want him to be uncomfortable, that's all. It's not fair, we both get beds and he has to sleep on *that* . Please. You know he's not going to try anything."

Mike grabs her shoulder, causing her to turn to him.

"El, honestly. The sofa isn't bad at all."

El simply shakes her head at him, and he lets out a small sigh of his own.

"I..." Hopper stumbles, not sure what to say. He lets out a much larger sigh than previous ones.

This kid. This... bloody... kid.

"Yeah... you know what? You're right. He won't."

Mike doesn't know what to think. Is this him giving in?

"Wheeler. Come here."

Oh man, oh god. This is it. I'm dead. Goodbye, cruel world.

He slowly creeps his way toward Hopper, before the man's arms are wrapped around him. Not tight, just a bit of a pat on the back if anything. *What the hell have I done to warrent this?*

"You're a good kid. I can trust you, can't I?"

Gulp. *Don't screw this up you moron. Cut the wrong wire and it's lights out.*

"Yessir." the words burst out of him in a panic. "Of course."

Hopper lets out a tiny laugh before laying off Mike. He looks into his eyes before giving him some final words.

"You mean a lot to her, you know that?"

As impossible as he thought it could be, his cheeks feel as if they're getting hotter.

Someone grab a fire extinguisher.

"I don't think she's ever spoken so much in her life."

They both glance at El, who looks like she's about to blush too.

"Fine. You can share the bed. But..." he pauses for a moment, before looking back to Mike once again. "I don't even need to say it, do I? For god's sake you'd die before hurting her and I know it. You'd pull the moon down for her if she asked."

He looks to the floor in embarrassment but quickly perks up.

"I'm sure I'd need her help to do *that* , sir." he states through a smile. Both El and Hopper laugh at the statement.

"Yeah you got that right. Go on, get to bed before I change my mind."

Mike gives him a smile before backing off slightly. "Thank you, sir."

"Yeah, yeah, go on." Hopper rolls his eyes once again before laying back down.

I don't stand a chance against these two.

They're soon both sharing the same bed, Mike sure he's going to burst into flames any time soon. He first offered to stay above the covers, but El shook her head and practically demanded he sleep under. As much as he realises she just wants him comfortable, he's still shy

beyond belief. He didn't think he'd be sleeping with her any time soon. But here we are. He'd survived the encounter with Hopper and now he's laying in the same bed as her, looking straight up to the ceiling, too scared to imagine what Hopper would do if he got any closer.

Well. That's him anyway. She clearly isn't worried the slightest, as she turns towards him and lays her hand over his chest, and leans towards him to press a kiss to his cheek.

"Goodnight, Mike."

Christ El, stop. I can't heat up much more than this. Shit, aren't these sheets flammable?

He shoves his thoughts into the back of his mind and gives in. He lets out a sigh before turning onto his side, and looking straight into her.

His sigh makes her assume something's wrong.

"Mike? What's wrong?"

He doesn't hesitate to calm her panic.

"Nothing! Nothing... it's just... I uh..." *Mike, for god's sake. When will you stop being so terrible with words?* "I just never really thought I'd ever sleep with-" **WOAH SLOW DOWN THERE COWBOY** "I mean uh... in the same... bed... as..."

El fails to hold back her smile. It grows as she thinks about what he's trying to say.

"It's okay, Mike. I understand."

The smile begins to replicate onto his face.

"I just... um..." *Oh for goodness sake, just say it you fool.*

"I..." **sigh** "I love you, El."

She feels her heart, stomach, mind go insane. She's heard the phrase in plenty of her soaps and she quickly caught grasp of what it means. She never thought she'd hear Mike say those words, especially to *her*. Why would he love a girl that's been isolated for twelve years? Surely he'd want someone normal. But here he is, and he's just said it, to *her*.

El's hesitation does nothing to ease Mike's feelings.

Mike. What have you done? Why would you say that? You're in her bed

and you tell her you love her? Good lord above, Mike, are you bloody stupi-

"I love you too, Mike."

wh- did she...

Alarm bells start ringing in his head. They're loud, nearly deathening in fact. How can she not hear them? Did she really just say that? No, surely he's hearing things. Why would she love Frog Face? Surely she's not stupid enough to love me...

His thoughts are erased as he feels her lips meet his. It's brief, but it feels like it lasted centuries for Mike. He can't help but let out a sigh, followed by the biggest, goofiest, dumbest smile he's ever felt himself wear. His lips feel like they're going to burst off his face any time now.

He grows weak to his instincts and leans his head against hers. Her breath is warm against his face, his warm against hers. They both stare into each-others eyes for a moment. Neither of them want to break the stare, ever. But they'll admit, they are kinda tired, even if they're pumped full of adrenaline after sharing their feelings for one another.

"Good night, El."

"Goodnight, Mike."

They both close their eyes in unison, and they eventually fall asleep like that. Their positions are mirrored: One hand across the other's waist, one hand in the middle of them, holding on to the other's hand, heads never moving apart more than an inch or two. They both remain like that throughout the entire night. It ends up being the most peaceful sleep either of them have had for a *long* time.

06:00. Hopper awakens to prepare for work. He first walks towards

El's bedroom, his motions nearly imitating those of a zombie. He slowly opens the door as to remain as quiet as possible, and checks on the two teenagers. Fast asleep, *very* close to one another. A voice in the back of his head is screaming at him. He should separate them, they're far too close to each-other. But he can't find the willpower to do it. They both look so *damn* peaceful together. He knows she has trouble sleeping most of the time, but now she's with Mike, she's even *smiling* in her sleep.

The voice tries its' best to force its' way forward, but he shoves it back. They're fine. She's right. They're just sleeping, they're not stupid. And, heck, if he for some unforsaken reason Mike *did* try anything against her will, she could just fling him across the room with her mind. But Mike isn't like that, not in the slightest. He's really got nothing to worry about. The thought puts him at peace, the voice in the back of his head finally shutting the hell up.

El looks up to him, and a mix of emotions play at her face. *Shit, I thought I was quiet.* Hopper looks to her, and immediately wants her to know that he's actually accepting his fate. He gives her a small smile and nods his head. A smile fades onto her face, as she mouths "thank you" to him silently, before laying her head back down, close, but not against Mike's, as if to avoid waking him up.

Hopper can't help but let his smile grow at the sight. As he retreats from the room, closing the door as quietly as humanly possible, he wonders to himself: How can they possibly be like this towards each-other *already* ?

He hears a new copy of his voice in his head, this one on their side. *You know exactly why they're like this. Stop trying to deny it.*

He sighs. With everything they've been through, it just makes sense. He takes a seat on the sofa and accepts his fate. They love each-other, and there's no stopping it.

Give up, Jim. You've lost already.

Author's Note:

So this is the first time I've actually had a tear break out whilst writing. I'm typically not too amazed by my own work (that's just not me) but it was as if my

fingers took over themselves when El interrupts Mike's thoughts with "I love you too" and I couldn't help myself.

Damnit, I'm way too in love with the idea of these two just being together at peace, with nothing to interrupt or harm them (not even Hopper, which I'm sure he'd probably be a bit more defensive in the Duffer's minds but oh well, too bad).

As always, thanks for reading. Please consider leaving kudos and/or a comment with your thoughts if you enjoyed and have the time; you won't believe how much your comments help boost my confidence when it comes to writing these stories.

Every single kudo puts a huge smile on my face and comments, oh man, comments. I explode with joy.

Jesus OTTSTF just shut up and let them go already.

Thanks for reading as always! Much love <3